

## **Cal Grants an Excellent Option for Low- and Middle-Income Students**

**By Jared Huffman**

Cal Grants are one of the smartest ways to get cash for college. For starters, it's money you don't have to pay back. Further, it's guaranteed. If you're a graduating high school senior or recent graduate, meet academic (2.0 average), financial and eligibility requirements and submit two forms by March 2, you are guaranteed a Cal Grant.

With a Cal Grant you can get up to \$9,700 a year to pay for college expenses at any qualifying California college, university or career or technical school in California. Depending on which Cal Grant you get (there are different variations), the money can be used for tuition, room and board, even books and pencils. The best part is, it's yours to keep and you don't have to pay it back.

The Cal Grant money can be used to attend all California public colleges, and most private and independent colleges or career school/technical education programs as varied as nursing, fashion and culinary arts. For those interested in pursuing a career in a technical education program, Cal Grants also offer a grant that does not prioritize grade point average.

***It's important to remember, however, that the deadline for applying for a Cal Grant is March 2 of this year.***

For more information on the Cal Grant Program, how to obtain an application, or how to fill out an application, high school students can contact their college counselors, call the California Student Aid Commission at 1-888-224-7268 or go to the Commission's website at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov).

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